

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

JUSTIN O’CONNOR,

Plaintiff,

v.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY,

Defendant.

Case No. _____

COMPLAINT

Demand for Jury Trial

Plaintiff Justin O’Connor (“Plaintiff”), by and through counsel, brings this Complaint against Defendant Ford Motor Company (“Defendant” or “Ford”), on behalf of himself, and alleges, upon personal knowledge as to his own actions and his counsel’s investigations, and upon information and belief as to all other matters, as follows:

NATURE OF THE CASE

1. Plaintiff brings this case individually as a consumer who leased a Model Year 2018 Ford F-150 vehicle that was designed, manufactured, distributed, marketed, sold, and leased by Defendant or Defendant’s parent, subsidiary, or affiliates thereof.

2. Defendant designed, manufactured, distributed, marketed, sold, and leased Model Year 2017-2019 Ford F-150 vehicles (“Vehicles”) equipped with the 10R80, a 10-speed automatic transmission (“Transmission”) designed and manufactured by Ford.

3. Defendant knew or should have known that the Vehicles contain one or more design and/or manufacturing defects, including but not limited to defects contained in the Vehicles’ 10R80, a ten-speed automatic transmission that can shift harshly and erratically, causing the vehicle to jerk, lunge, and hesitate between gears.

4. An automatic transmission is essentially an automatic gear shifter. Instead of manually shifting the gears with a clutch, the automatic transmission does it on its own. The transmission acts as a powertrain to convert the vehicle engine's force into a controlled source of power. Accordingly, drivers need a properly functioning automatic transmission in order to safely and reliably accelerate and decelerate their Vehicles.

5. A common design and/or manufacturing defect in Ford's 10R80 transmissions is a potentially life-threatening safety issue and Ford has refused to recall or replace the defective Transmissions.

6. Ford's warranty states that "dealers will, without charge, repair, replace, or adjust all parts on your vehicle that malfunction or fail during normal use during the applicable coverage period due to a manufacturing defect in factory-supplied materials or factory workmanship."¹

7. Upon information and belief, Ford refuses to replace or repair the Transmissions and merely states that the abrupt and harsh shifting is normal.

8. Prior to leasing the Vehicle, Plaintiff did not know that the Vehicles would abruptly and harshly shift due to the Transmission Defect and cause his vehicle to unexpectedly surge, hesitate, and jerk.

9. Upon information and belief, Plaintiff alleges that Defendant knew or should have known that the Vehicles are defective and suffer from the Transmission Defect and are not fit for their intended purpose of providing consumers with safe and reliable transportation. Nevertheless, Defendant failed to disclose this defect to Plaintiff at the time of his purchase and thereafter.

¹Source: http://www.fordservicecontent.com/Ford_Content/Catalog/owner_information/2018-Ford-Car-Lt-Truck-version-5_frdwa_EN-US_01_2018_3.pdf

10. Had Plaintiff known about the Transmission Defect at the time of sale or lease, as well as the associated costs related to the Transmission Defect, Plaintiff would not have leased the Vehicle or would have paid less for it.

11. As a result of his reliance on Defendant's omissions and/or misrepresentations, Plaintiff has suffered ascertainable loss of money, property, and/or loss in value of his Vehicle.

12. The first priority of an auto manufacturer should be to ensure that its vehicles are safe and operate as intended to prevent or minimize the threat of death or serious bodily harm. In addition, an auto manufacturer must take all reasonable steps to ensure that, once a vehicle is running, it operates safely, and its mechanical systems (such as the transmission) work properly. Moreover, an auto manufacturer that is aware of dangerous design defects that cause its vehicles to jerk, hesitate, surge, or slip gears must promptly disclose and remedy such defects.

13. This case arises from Defendant's breach of its obligations and duties, including Defendant's omissions and failure to disclose that, as a result of the Transmission Defect, the Vehicles may shift harshly, slips gears, hesitate, or surge, creating an unreasonable risk of serious bodily harm and death.

14. The Transmission Defect makes the Vehicles unreasonably dangerous. Because of the defect, the Vehicles stall unexpectedly, fail to accelerate when necessary, and are likely to catch fire if accidents occur. There is an unreasonable and extreme risk of serious bodily harm or death to the vehicle's occupants and others in the vicinity if involved in a collision caused by the Transmission Defect.

PARTIES

15. Plaintiff Justin O'Connor is an Illinois citizen who lives in Oswego, located in Kendall County, Illinois. Mr. O'Connor leased a 2018 Ford F-150 XLT 3.5 EcoBoost w/10spd transmission. This vehicle was designed, manufactured, sold, distributed, advertised, marketed, and/or warranted by Ford Motor Company.

16. Defendant Ford Motor Company is a publicly traded corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware with The Corporation Trust Company, Corporation Trust Center, 1209 Orange Street, Wilmington, Delaware 19801 as its registered agent. Ford's principle place of business is at One American Road, Dearborn, Michigan 48126.

17. Ford, through its various entities, designs, manufactures, markets, distributes, and sells its vehicles in this District and many other locations in the United States and worldwide. Ford and/or its agents designed, manufactured, and installed the Ford transmissions in the Vehicles. Ford also developed and disseminated the owner's manuals, warranty booklets, advertisements, and other promotional materials pertaining to Vehicles.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

18. The Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action under, 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a). The Plaintiff and Defendant are citizens of different states and the matter in controversy exceeds the sum or value of \$75,000.

19. The Court has personal jurisdiction over Ford because, through its business of distributing, selling, and leasing the Vehicles in this District, Ford has established sufficient contacts in this District such that personal jurisdiction is appropriate.

20. Venue is proper in this District under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(a) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to Plaintiff's claims occurred in this District. Specifically, Plaintiff O'Connor's Vehicle was leased in this District.

THE NATURE OF THE TRANSMISSION DEFECT

21. For many years, Ford has designed, manufactured, advertised, sold, and leased its popular Ford F-Series pickup trucks, which has been the best-selling pickup in the United States for the last 42 years.²

22. On its website, Ford touts the F-150's superiority among its competitors:

CLASS-LEADING CAPABILITY

The Ford F-150 makes tough tasks look easy, whether it's working on the job or heading out on a weekend of recreation. F-150 outperforms every other truck in its class when hauling cargo in the bed or towing a trailer.* No wonder the competition is always in a scramble to follow the leader.

24. In terms of power, Ford states the F-150's 3.5L Ecoboost engine with 10-speed transmission provides "on-demand power with virtually no lag"³:

²Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/autos/news/ford-f-series-is-americas-best-selling-truck-for-42nd-straight-year/ar-BBRLwMm>

³<https://www.ford.com/trucks/f150/?hptid=fv-2598-hp-va%3Abillboard%3Aslide0%3Ana%3Aford%20f-150&gnav=header-all-vehicles>

3.5L ECOBOOST®

The 3.5L EcoBoost® with 10-speed transmission boasts impressive power ratings of 375 horsepower and best-in-class* 470 lb.-ft. of torque, beating out all gas and diesel competitors. This engine delivers the F-150 best-in-class* tow rating too. Features include the Ford port-fuel and direct-injection (PFDI) system with two injectors per cylinder — one in the air intake port, another inside the cylinder — to increase performance. Plus twin intercooled turbos for on-demand power with virtually no lag.

*When properly configured. Class is Full-Size Pickups under 8,500 lbs. GVWR based on Ford segmentation.

23. Ford further highlights its 10-speed automatic transmission as shown below:

10-SPEED AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION

F-150 EcoBoost®, V8 and diesel engines deliver their power through an advanced 10-speed automatic transmission. Compared with the 6-speed, the 10-speed delivers improved overall performance, with enhanced acceleration at the low and mid ranges of the power band. Features include optimized wide-span gear spacing coupled with drag-reduction actions plus three overdrive gears. What's more, you can choose from selectable modes: Normal, Tow-Haul, Snow-Wet, EcoSelect, and Sport.



24. In terms of express warranties, Ford offers a “New Vehicle Limited Warranty” for three years or 36,000 miles, whichever occurs first.⁴

25. Ford also offers extended warranty coverage for Powertrain components for five years or 60,000 miles, whichever occurs first. This extended warranty coverage includes the transmission and all internal parts, clutch cover, seals and gaskets, torque converter, transfer case (including all internal parts), transmission case, and transmission mounts.

⁴ Source: 2018 Model Year Ford Warranty Guide;
http://www.fordservicecontent.com/Ford_Content/Catalog/owner_information/2018-Ford-Car-Lt-Truck-version-5_frdwa_EN-US_01_2018_3.pdf

26. Despite the popularity of Ford's F-150, the truck has not been without its problems. In February 2019, Ford issued three recalls, one of which covered select 2011 and 2013 Ford F-150 vehicles with six-speed automatic transmissions. In that recall, approximately 1.48 million F-150 trucks had a defect that can cause the truck to unexpectedly downshift into first gear causing accidents and injury to drivers.⁵

27. Plaintiff alleges a common transmission defect in his 2018 model year Ford F-150 with a ten-speed transmission. As discussed herein, numerous F-150 drivers have experienced a loud "clunking" noise when starting the engine. One driver stated that the transmission "clunk" was so loud that he thought he had been hit by another car. Other drivers complain that their transmissions slip gears, jerk, and/or shift roughly. In one NHTSA complaint, a vehicle lost all power while accelerating through an intersection and the transmission failed to shift up or down. In another complaint, an F-150 would repeatedly stay stuck in the same gear, making the truck inoperable for several hours at a time.

28. Due to the Transmission Defect, drivers have reported whiplash due to harsh shifting. Finally, many drivers have stated in NHTSA complains that they do not feel safe driving their F-150's in normal traffic conditions due to the vehicles' uncertain shifting, slipping transmission, and unreliable acceleration.

29. In response to customer complaints, Ford issued at least two Technical Service Bulletins ("TSBs") addressing the Transmission Defect. While the TSBs were meant to address harsh or bumpy transmission shifting, Ford advised that issues were normal and did not offer to repair or replace the Transmissions.

⁵ Source: <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/02/13/ford-issues-3-recalls-covering-nearly-1point5-million-vehicles.html>

30. Due to Ford's unwillingness to acknowledge the Transmission Defect and refusal to repair the Vehicles, Plaintiff continues to drive a defective and unsafe Vehicle.

PLAINTIFF'S EXPERIENCE

31. Mr. O'Connor was shopping for a safe and reliable vehicle to serve as his personal vehicle and to commute to and from work. As a result of his research, in July 2018, he leased a brand new 2018 Ford F-150 XLT 3.5 EcoBoost w/10spd transmission pick-up truck from Fox Valley Ford (now called Gerald Ford) in North Aurora, Illinois (an authorized Ford dealership). Mr. O'Connor's vehicle was equipped with the defective ten-speed transmission. As per the terms in the lease, Mr. O'Connor made a down payment of \$3715.31 and pays \$550.00 per month.

32. At the time of Mr. O'Connor's lease, Ford knew that its F-150 10R80, ten-speed automatic transmissions had the defect but did not disclose this defect to Mr. O'Connor. Mr. O'Connor leased – then operated the vehicle on the reasonable but incorrect belief that his Vehicle's transmission would operate properly as warranted.

33. Approximately 5 months after leasing the Vehicle (in or about December 2018) and with approximately 6000 miles on the odometer, Mr. O'Connor started to notice a loud “clunk” or “bang” noise upon starting the engine. From the time he leased the Vehicle, Mr. O'Connor noticed that during warm up and colder operation of the Vehicle, the transmission holds gears much longer than it should and often has a loss of power while shifting.

34. On another date in or about January 2019, Mr. O'Connor was driving when his Vehicle lost its acceleration/shifting capabilities and displayed a message stating “drive mode not available” with the orange wrench indicator staying illuminated on the dash. The Vehicle put itself into “limp mode” and he was able pull into a nearby parking lot to get out of the roadway

to avoid being rear-ended by other vehicles. In order to drive home, he had to disconnect the battery, which reset the drive mode and allowed him to get home.

35. Neither Ford nor any of its agents, dealers, or representatives informed Mr. O'Connor of the Transmission Defect prior to his lease of the Vehicle.

36. Had Mr. O'Connor been advised of the Transmission Defect at or before the point of lease, he would not have leased his Vehicle or else would have paid significantly less for the Vehicle. Mr. O'Connor did not receive the benefit of his bargain. As a result, Mr. O'Connor has paid and continues to pay a premium for a defective vehicle which poses a safety hazard to himself, his family, and others.

37. If Mr. O'Connor's F-150 transmission did not contain the Defect, he would likely lease or purchase another Ford F-150 in the future. Alternatively, if the Court were to issue an injunction ordering Defendant to comply with advertising and warranty laws and fully address the safety issue, Mr. O'Connor would likely lease or purchase an F-150 again in the future.

**DEFENDANT KNEW OR SHOULD HAVE KNOWN OF THE TRANSMISSION
DEFECT PRIOR TO PLAINTIFF'S PURCHASE**

A. Ford's Knowledge and Refusal to Remedy the Transmission Defect

38. Since the 10R80 transmission was introduced and equipped in the Vehicles, drivers have repeatedly complained about difficulty shifting and vehicle lunging and/or jerking to Ford. There is an unusually large number of complaints of harsh and belabored transmission shifting such that Ford was put on notice of a specific problem.

39. Namely, as the consumer complaints below indicate, Ford was aware, or should have been aware, that the Transmission Defect was present in the Vehicles dating back to at least March 2018, the date of the first TSB.

40. Thus, by at least March 2018 (and before Plaintiff's purchase), Ford knew or should have known through sufficient product testing, consumer complaints, or other methods, that the Vehicles contained the Transmission Defect.

41. Upon information and belief, the Vehicles contain one or more defects in materials, components, construction or design, including but not limited to, the Transmission Defect, as described herein.

42. Upon information and belief, faced with the fact that Vehicles were not properly shifting due to the Transmission Defect, Ford issued multiple Technical Service Bulletins ("TSBs") addressing the shifting problems.

43. The TSBs stated 2017 and 2018 F-150 vehicles "may exhibit harsh/bumpy upshift, downshift and/or engagement concerns."⁶ The TSBs suggested reprogramming the powertrain control module ("PCM"). The TSB's further stated that the Vehicles were "equipped with an adaptive transmission shift strategy which allows the vehicle's computer to learn the transmission's unique parameters and improve shift quality. When the adaptive strategy is reset, the computer will begin a re-learning process. This re-learning process may result in firmer than normal upshifts and downshifts for several days."⁷

44. Upon information and believe, Ford's "adaptive transmission shift strategy" fails to remedy the shifting problems reported in Vehicles.

45. Despite this knowledge, Ford took no further steps to remedy this issue, leaving Plaintiff and other consumers with knowingly defective Vehicles.

⁶ Source: <https://static.nhtsa.gov/odi/tsbs/2018/MC-10149749-9999.pdf>

⁷Source: <https://static.nhtsa.gov/odi/tsbs/2018/MC-10149749-9999.pdf>

B. Customers Repeatedly Complained About Harsh and Erratic Shifting and Vehicle Lunging, Hesitation, and Jerking.

46. Hundreds, if not thousands, of purchasers and lessees of the Vehicles have experienced the Transmission Defect. Complaints filed by consumers with the NHTSA and posted on the Internet demonstrate that the Transmission Defect is widespread. Not only have consumers complained about harsh and bumpy shifting, but this often led to potentially life-threatening. In addition, these complaints illuminate Ford's awareness of the Transmission Defect and its potential danger (note that spelling and grammar mistakes remain as found in the original):

2017 Ford F-150

NHTSA Complaint dated May 20, 2019: original problem was transmission slamming into gear and slipping when accelerating. the truck was kept at agency for 2 1/2 weeks. service manager told me that ford instructed him to quit working on it. problem of slipping still exist and recently the vehicle jumped out of gear when i was merging onto the interstate, i do not feel safe driving this vehicle. (ID No. 11208720)

NHTSA Complaint dated March 14, 2019: vehicle lost all power while accelerating thru an intersection. the orange wrench illuminated on the dash with "check manual". i noticed the transmission not shifting down and up smoothly. it tried to start the truck off in 5th gear from a stop. after being shut down for an hour, the issue went away. dealer scanned it this morning and said no code was stored. (ID No. 11079161)

NHTSA Complaint dated April 12, 2019: transmission will stick and not change gears. like a dead spot and truck would not go faster. this has happened several times. (ID No. 11195806)

NHTSA Complaint dated April 8, 2019: traveling down my driveway, coming to a stop and the transmission gets stuck in 3rd gear. it won't down shift into 1st gear so it won't move forward. i put the shifter into reverse and i am able to back up. put shifter into drive and still stuck in 3rd gear. back up to my house and park the truck not able to go anywhere. go into the house wait a couple of hours and then try it again and everything is okay. this has happened to me 3 other times. (ID No. 11195452)

NHTSA Complaint dated November 18, 2017: 4500 miles on vehicle, never towed anything, only normal city/highway driving, no long trips ever taken. was turning left at intersection and transmission seemed to slip, truck still made it through, i then noticed that a yellow "wrench" light came on, i assumed this was for my upcoming 5k mile oil change. i didn't think much of the "slip" and assumed it was an anomaly. i then got onto the highway and noticed the truck was behaving strangely, power was inconsistent, i attempted to put it into cruise control and it refused to activate. i got off of highway and turned left at an intersection, starting from a complete stop the

truck lurched forward and then slipped out of gear and stalled out in the intersection. if a car was coming i would have easily been struck. i let it sit for a few seconds and then the transmission finally got into, and stayed in, first gear. at first it went into gear and then slipped out of gear. this "wrench" light was apparently a limp home mode, another complaint, besides the stalling, would be the fact that this little yellow wrench light does nothing to warn me that the truck is actually in an impaired state, a "limp" mode. i work in the aerospace industry and this would never be tolerated, a function that hampers the normal performance of your vehicle should be easy to recognize as a warning, a little yellow wrench looks like a service light. (ID No. 11047221)

2018 Ford F-150

NHTSA Complaint dated May 13, 2019: intermittent transmission hesitation under acceleration, while pulling into traffic from a side street. without warning the truck completely cuts out. the engine is still running but there is no forward acceleration from the truck. this lasts about 10 seconds. two incidents so far. also very heavy, abrupt shifting, jerking shifting. also intermittent when shifting the truck into reverse while stationary there is a loud heavy clunk from the transmission. (ID No. 11207153)

NHTSA Complaint dated April 17, 2019: with 2018 f-150 10 speed transmission is shifting hard an down shifts hard getting whiplash. downstairs too hard been at the dealership today is the second time they constantly act like there's nothing wrong with the vehicle av to reset it once before still having major problems with that new transmission. so basically in inner-city driving is somebody was to jump in front of the vehicle with downshift quickly giving driver or any passengers whiplash stop the vehicle not a very safe or practical build can cause accidents and give major problems if anybody has bad backs or necks was not disclosed at time of sale of a hard shifting transmissions. (ID No. 11196876)

NHTSA Complaint dated April 11, 2019: my truck has 15,000 miles on it. the acceleration will run away frequently (press the pedal and there is a severe lag and lack of power). there will be random engine noise when decelerating around 45 miles per hour. also, acceleration will be rough when going from 20-30 miles per hour just before the it shifts into a higher gear. i took this to the ford dealer and they said there are no error codes on the trucks computer system. also, the steering will be stiff or unaligned at random times. please assist in getting these issues corrected. (ID No. 11195550)

NHTSA Complaint dated March 26, 2019: tl* the contact owns a 2018 ford f-150. while driving various speeds, the vehicle hesitated to accelerate while depressing the accelerator pedal. also, a clunking noise was present when the transmission switched gears and the vehicle felt different. the vehicle was not diagnosed or repaired. nye ford (1555 upper lennix ave, onye, ny) and the manufacturer were notified of the failure. the vin was not available. the failure mileage was 14,000. (ID No. 11191541)

NHTSA Complaint dated March 4, 2019: since purchasing the truck, the 10 speed automatic transmission doesn't seem to shift smoothly in many gears. it seems to lurch when shifting at often times and will skip gears when sifting quite frequently. for a new vehicle it doesn't shift smoothly at all. it's been serviced at an authorized ford dealer where they told me the transmission was

reprogrammed due to a technical service bulletin but even since then it still doesn't shift smoothly. it happens pretty much everyday or every time i drive it since it was purchased. (ID No. 11184182)

NHTSA Complaint dated February 20, 2019: this vehicle generally exhibits harsh upshifts (3rd-to-4th) and downshifts (4th-to-3rd) as indicated on the driver's ip. (ID No. 11181413)

i have experienced multiple occasions when the vehicle will "miss" the shift from 3rd to 4th, normally when cold and under light to moderate throttle conditions. the gear indicator briefly shows 1st gear, however, i was able to apply full throttle (100% accel pedal), but had no power to the wheels (drive is not engaged), engine speed rose to approximately 3000 rpm. this condition lasted for about 2-3 secs before it shifted to 4th, the revs settled to normal/expected range and drive to the wheels was re-engaged. this is an extremely dangerous condition that leaves me without power to safely accelerate, or merge with traffic. (ID No. 11181413)

NHTSA Complaint dated February 20, 2019: tl* the contact owns a 2018 ford f-150. while driving various speeds, the transmission downshifted on its own. the vehicle was taken to joel confer ford (2935 penns valley pike, centre hall, bellfornte, pa) on several occasions for the same failure and the transmission control module was reprogrammed; however, the failures continued. the manufacturer was notified of the failures, but no assistance was offered. the vin was not available. the failure mileage was 10,000. *tt*jb (ID No. 11181310)

NHTSA Complaint dated February 13, 2019: transmission downshifts hard, delays of power to rear wheels, clunking noise, shuddering. been to dealership,3 times for transmission. dealership said i need to drive the truck until transmission gets worse before they can fix it. dealership said im wasting their time with warranty work. ford will not take action to help. transmission problems make the truck unsafe to drive along with its severe steering problems. please someone please help me before myself or my kids or someone else gets injured due to this unsafe truck and negligent dealership and ford (ID No. 11179963)

NHTSA Complaint dated February 9, 2019: 10-speed transmission hesitates/randomly shifts constantly during driving. when stopping at traffic lights, after being completely stopped, the vehicle lurches and an audible clunk can be heard from the transmission. it has always been sluggish when accelerating, today that has gotten far worse and the transmission light is on. i had a 45 minute drive home and the truck struggled to get up to 40 mph. this erratic transmission behavior makes it dangerous to drive in any kind of traffic or on the highway because you can't predict how the vehicle will behave when pushing the gas pedal. (ID No. 11175904)

NHTSA Complaint dated January 18, 2019: the transmission can not decide which gear to be in creating pauses of power distribution to the rear wheels. the transmission shifts hard and pulls the vehicle back and forth creating loud clunking noises and rattling the passengers. the poor operation of the transmission creates unsafe driving conditions. (ID No. 11170881)

NHTSA Complaint dated February 13, 2019: transmission downshifts hard, delays of power to rear wheels, clunking noise, shuddering. been to dealership,3 times for transmission. dealership said i need to drive the truck until transmission gets worse before they can fix it. dealership said im wasting their time with warranty work. ford will not take action to help. transmission problems

make the truck unsafe to drive along with its severe steering problems. please someone please help me before myself or my kids or someone else gets injured due to this unsafe truck and negligent dealership and ford (ID No. 11179963)

NHTSA Complaint dated January 18, 2019: vehicle will sometimes hesitate during acceleration and transmission will slip - engine rpms will rise to about 2000 and then transmission will engage with a heavy clunk in the drive train. this issues has happened when engine is cold and at normal operating temp. the vehicle currently has 9000 miles on the odometer and has happened five(5) times already. took to local dealer and they are unable to doplicate (ID No. 11166063)

NHTSA Complaint dated December 13, 2018: my truck occasionally does not accelerate from a stop at the correct speed. the rpms go way up but the truck barely moves. i described it to the dealer as being in 1/2 of 1st gear, but even then it does not feel totally connected between engine and transmission. it was much worse during hot weather. (ID No. 11161192)

NHTSA Complaint dated November 8, 2018: while driving 60mph up a slight incline on the interstate, the truck stopped decelerating. the engine rpms jumped up. fortunately i was in the right hand lane and pulled to the shoulder and out of traffic. i was able to rev the rpms and no acceleration, while the gear indicator continued to read "d." it appeared the transmission slipped out of all gears. i coasted to a stop and apologized to my friend for the language as i was on a handsfree call. i placed the gear selector in park, noticed that there were no warning indicators on the dash, and shut off the truck. i pulled out the manual and tried to think of what to do next. finding no solutions, a friend suggested before i call a tow truck, to start it up and try to put it in drive. i did, and it went into gear normally. it has not happened again, however it has had a few unusually aggressive gear changes. i do not trust this truck with the coyote v-8 engine and 10-speed transmission combination. (ID No. 11161177)

NHTSA Complaint dated December 7, 2018: tl* the contact owns a 2018 ford f-150. the contact stated that the transmission shifted unevenly in the first three gears. when the vehicle was started initially, the rpms increased and decreased. the contact called koons sterling ford (46869 harry byrd hwy, sterling, va 20164, (703) 430-7700) and was informed that there was no recall for the failure. a diagnostic appointment was scheduled for a recall that was unrelated to the failure. the manufacturer was not contacted. the failure mileage was 13,000. (ID No. 11156801)

NHTSA Complaint dated December 7, 2018: 10 speed automatic transmission. transmission makes noise, shifts hard when cold, bucks and surges at lower speeds, downshifts are harsh. dealer states this is all normal behavior for this transmission. worst automatic i have ever owned. (ID No. 11156896)

NHTSA Complaint dated November 17, 2018: 10 speed transmission has been an ongoing issue, was hopeful it would resolve itself once the 5k mile break-in period was surpassed. transmission is awkward, clumsy and spends too much time hunting between gear shifts. my 2013 f150 with 105k miles on it drives noticeably smoother. ford dealer ok with no real explanation for customers. (ID No. 11152174)

NHTSA Complaint dated October 8, 2018: transmission has intermittent slipping and very rough up and down shifting. it also has intermittent rough hot start (truck kicks forward as if it wants to take off during start up). the truck also has problems shifting while on "sport" mode in which it will not shift up to the next gear even as it reaches the red line in the tachometer. these problems have progressively increased since i bought the truck back in november 2017. i have brought up these concerns to two separate ford dealers and both stated i had to get used to the shifting in this new 10 speed transmission. both dealers also stated that they've had lots of costumer complaints regarding my concern but have not received any direction from ford. my concern is that the transmission might lock up, seize or have a catastrophic failure in which fluid would spill on the roadway and cause me to loose control of the truck. i have looked into several forums and found lots of people with similar complains regarding this 10 speed transmission. please help...thank you. (ID No. 11139060)

NHTSA Complaint dated September 6, 2018: same issues I'm reading here. vehicle frequently makes a loud bang when started. shifts gears extremely rough to the point where you're jerked around. no power when trying to accelerate from a stop which is extremely dangerous when cars are behind you or trying to accelerate merging onto the freeway. my truck has been to dealer twice now. the first time it was because my fuel injector went out at 4,500 miles! it doesn't run much better now. when i took it in they just blew me off and said it was "normal behavior for the vehicle. reading all these issues here, ford really needs to take action! extremely dangerous!! (ID No. 11124723)

NHTSA Complaint dated August 23, 2018: 10-speed transmission: the transmission shifts very badly. jerky shifting and often times the truck is sluggish when starting from a stop, often times to the point of acting like the engine is about to die. the only way to partially correct this issues is to drive aggressively and take off from a start with more throttle than one would normally want to. occasionally you can hear/feel a knock from under the truck - underneath the driver's seat when you start the truck and place the transmission in drive. other times when you start the truck and quickly place the transmission in drive the engine will cut off all while your right foot is still on the brake pedal. on one occasion while i was driving through an intersection on a highway at a slow speed (3 - 5 mph?) behind a car which made a right hand turn, i started accelerating and a very loud bang noise occurred that sounded like two cars hitting one another and a hard shake was felt. i checked my mirrors because i thought someone had rear-ended me. just this terrible 10-speed transmission. all of what i have described is after taking the truck to 2 different ford dealerships. all they have done so far is to re-install software. i plan to take it back to a dealership for the third time hoping that maybe someone might test drive it and actually drop the transmission oil pan and actually look at the transmission. maybe if i am lucky the transmission will self-destruct. (ID No. 11121927)

NHTSA Complaint dated August 4, 2018: truck downshifts very erratically and harsh from 6th to 5th gear while braking, causing the brake pedal to be pushed down at various pressures due to the truck lunging forward because of the erratic and harsh downshift from 6th to 5th gear. truck does not feel safe, the downshift is so erratic and harsh that it feels as if you are being rear ended. i have allowed time for the transmission to "learn" as stated in the manual but it has not changed. (ID No. 11119910)

NHTSA Complaint dated April 20, 2018: 10 speed transmission hazards: when braking the transmission lunges into to lower gears and surges forward erratically requiring varying brake pressure to stop. acceleration is also erratic, sometimes delayed, sometimes immediate. the ford dealership does not have a solution and ford will not responds to calls. the erratic behavior of the transmission makes the vehicle dangerous. (ID No. 11089179)

NHTSA Complaint dated April 9, 2018: tl* the contact owns a 2018 ford f-150. while driving approximately 10 mph with the vehicle in first gear, the vehicle shifted into neutral. a few seconds later, the vehicle shifted into second gear. the contact stated that the failure recurred fifteen times. the vehicle was taken to the dealer (moberly motors ford in moberly, missouri, 660-263-6000) determined that the vehicle performed normally. the vehicle was not repaired. the manufacturer was notified of the failure. the approximate failure mileage was 521. (ID No. 11084065)

47. Ford failed to disclose the defect or failed to conduct sufficient testing or research that would have revealed the defect. As a result, Ford has caused Ford F-150 drivers to expend money at its dealerships or other third-party repair facilities and/or take other remedial measures related to the Transmission Defect in the Vehicles.

48. As evidenced by the customer complaints, Ford had sufficient notice regarding harsh and abnormal shifting and loss of vehicle power.

49. Ford has never disclosed the Transmission Defect to consumers. Instead, Ford attempted to squelch public recognition of the Transmission Defect by propagating the falsehood that the harsh and bumpy shifting in Vehicles was “normal.”

50. Ford has allowed Plaintiff and other lessees and buyers to continue to drive the Vehicles, despite knowing that they are prone to harsh or abrupt shifting, hesitation, and surging.

51. Ford has not recalled the Vehicles to repair the Transmission Defect and has not offered to reimburse Vehicle owners and lessees who incurred costs relating to the transmission problems.

52. Plaintiff is a reasonable consumer who does not reasonably expect his Vehicle to harshly and abruptly shift and experience sudden and unexpected power surges and losses.

53. Plaintiff reasonably expected that Ford would not sell or lease Vehicles with known defects, such as the Transmission Defect, and that it would disclose any such defects to its customers before they purchased or leased Vehicles. Plaintiff did not expect Ford to conceal the Transmission Defect, or to continually deny its existence.

54. Consequently, Plaintiff has not received the benefit for which he bargained when he leased his Vehicle.

55. As a result of the Transmission Defect, the value of the Plaintiff's Vehicle has diminished, including without limitation the lease-end value or resale value of the Vehicle.

56. Ford was under a continuous duty to disclose to Plaintiff the true character, quality, and nature of the defective Transmission.

57. Ford knowingly concealed the true nature, quality, and character of the defective Transmissions from consumers.

58. Based on the foregoing, Ford is estopped from relying on any statutes of limitations in defense of this action.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION
Breach of Express Warranty

59. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

60. In the course of selling and leasing the Vehicles, Ford expressly warranted in writing that the vehicles were covered by certain warranties in Ford's "New Vehicle Limited Warranty" as described herein. This express warranty states that "authorized Ford Motor Company dealers will, without charge, repair, replace, or adjust all parts on your vehicle that

malfunction or fail during normal use during the applicable coverage period due to a manufacturing defect in the factory-supplied materials or factory workmanship.”⁸

61. As evidenced by the TSB from September 7, 2018, the Transmission Defect is covered by New Vehicle Limited Warranty.

62. The New Vehicle Limited Warranty as described was made part of the basis of the bargain when Plaintiff bought the Vehicle.

63. Ford breached its express warranties to repair defects in materials and workmanship of any part supplied by Ford. Ford has not repaired, and has been unwilling to reasonably repair, the Transmission Defect.

64. Furthermore, the express warranties to repair defective parts fail in their essential purpose because the contractual remedy is insufficient to make Plaintiff whole and because Ford has failed and/or has refused to adequately provide the promised remedies within a reasonable time.

65. Accordingly, recovery by Plaintiff is not limited to the express warranties of repair to parts defective in materials or workmanship, and Plaintiff seeks all remedies as allowed by law.

66. Ford was provided notice of these issues by numerous customer complaints regarding the Transmission Defect before of within a reasonable amount of time after the allegations of the defect became public.

67. As a direct and proximate result of Ford’s breach of express warranties, Plaintiff has been damaged in an amount to be determined at trial.

⁸ Source: http://www.fordservicecontent.com/Ford_Content/Catalog/owner_information/2018-Ford-Car-Lt-Truck-version-5_frdwa_EN-US_01_2018_3.pdf

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION
Violation of Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act
(15 U.S.C. § 2301, *et seq.*)

68. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

69. Plaintiff is a “consumer” within the meaning of 15 U.S.C. § 2301(6).

70. Defendant is a “supplier” and “warrantor” within the meaning of 15 U.S.C. § 2301(6).

71. The Vehicles are “consumer products” within the meaning of 15 U.S.C. § 2301(6).

72. Ford’s express warranties are each a “written warranty” within the meaning of 15 U.S.C. § 2301(6).

73. As discussed herein, Ford extended a three-year/36,000 mile New Vehicle Limited Warranty with the purchase or lease of the Vehicles, thereby warranting to repair or replace any part defective in material or workmanship at no cost to the owner or lessee. Ford further extended a five-year/60,000 mile Powertrain Warranty with the purchase or lease of the Vehicles.

74. Ford breached each of these express warranties by:

- a. Selling and leasing Vehicles with transmissions that were defective in material and workmanship, requiring repair or replacement within the warranty period; and
- b. Refusing and/or failing to honor the express warranties by repairing or replacing, free of charge, any defective component parts.

75. Ford’s breach of express warranty has deprived Plaintiff the benefit of his bargain.

76. The amount in controversy of the Plaintiff’s individual claims meet or exceed the sum or value of \$50,000.00.

77. Ford has been afforded a reasonable opportunity to cure its breach of written warranty, including when owners and lessees brought their vehicles in for diagnosis and repair of the Transmission Defect.

78. As a direct and proximate cause of Ford's breach of written warranties, Plaintiff sustained damages and other losses in an amount to be determined at trial. Ford's conduct damaged Plaintiff, who is entitled to recover actual damages, consequential damages, specific performance, diminution of value, costs, including statutory attorneys' fees and/or other relief as appropriate.

REQUEST FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court enter judgment in his favor and against Defendant, as follows:

- A. Ordering Defendant to pay actual damages (and no less than the statutory minimum damages) and equitable monetary relief to Plaintiff;
- B. Ordering Defendant to pay punitive damages, as allowable by law, to Plaintiff;
- C. Ordering Defendant to pay statutory damages, as allowable by the statutes asserted herein, to Plaintiff;
- D. Awarding injunctive relief as permitted by law or equity, including enjoining Defendant from continuing the unlawful practices as set forth herein, and ordering Defendant to engage in a corrective recall campaign;
- E. Ordering Defendant to pay attorneys' fees and litigation costs to Plaintiff;
- F. Ordering Defendant to pay both pre- and post-judgement interest on any amounts awarded; and
- G. Ordering such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury as to all matters so triable.

Dated: July 26, 2019

s/Gregory F. Coleman
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